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19 JUL 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Management and Services

SUBJECT : Television and the Agency

1. This does not pretend to be a paper that is formal, official, fully staffed or coordinated in detail. It responds to recent memos from OTR and MAG concerning television (TABS C and D).

2. Those papers talked of the need for centralized Agency consideration of certain aspects of TV and the MAG paper, noted by Mr. Colby, was sent to the DDM&S for comments.

3. As a result, an ad hoc group got together on 2 July to exchange views and data. The group included representatives from [] CRS, NPIC, OTS, OTR, OJCS and COMMO. The same offices, plus OS, were represented at a follow-up meeting on 16 July, called to seek agreement on means to address the concerns expressed in the MAG paper, which saw the need for a focal-point in the Agency to deal with a burgeoning and unorchestrated investment in video equipment and facilities. The conclusions of this meeting are incorporated in the suggestions at the end of this paper. No attempt has been made, however, to obtain full agreement on all that is said here. This paper is intended as a think-piece designed to show that the role of video in the Agency is a potentially rich one and could have impact far greater than generally suspected now. (For details concerning current video activities in the Agency, minutes of the 2 July meeting of the ad hoc group are attached at TAB A.)

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4. Though the emphasis in the MAG paper was on the need for coordinating equipment procurement and facilities investment, one is struck by the dimensions of the video topic that go far beyond this legitimate but narrow concern.

5. Video can be of importance to collection. [] has begun to broaden its collection of open-source foreign TV broadcasting and to experiment with ways to exploit such broadcasting for intelligence purposes. (This, incidentally, is much easier said than done.) One can foresee a time when DDO reporting from abroad may lean heavily on real-time video and audio transmissions to headquarters along lines similar to those of current American news networks.

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6. Such collection will doubtless be of importance to future intelligence production. Future production is sure to involve more than mere printed text. Multi-media presentations, or at least the options for them, should be part of the production inventory. The material collected will permit of this; prime consumers of the future are likely to be more at home with a product in visible, audible, not necessarily legible, forms.

7. The collection and production of video materials will require sophisticated storage and retrieval systems to permit orderly filing and quick recall for analytical research and production. Current arrangements for analytical review of available video data require disruption of the analytical processes (one must go to a centralized viewing area in CRS to see what is available) and this in time must change. The video format, in the future, is best considered as just one more form of source material to be made directly available to analytic work areas.

8. Television is on its way to becoming a major vehicle for training purposes. Agency-produced or externally-prepared films can be made available to individuals or groups in Agency components here or abroad. The preparation and extension of such training films can be of very high value; it is a special art-form requiring special skills and expertise.

9. Video is in use by Security and the DDO for surveillance purposes. Video would appear to be a natural for such purposes and its use in this regard seems likely to grow (though the ad hoc group did not delve into this aspect in detail).

10. Television is apt to play an increasingly important role in management and in communications between working levels. Video taping of policy guidance and direction from top levels can complement printed notices or relaying (with inevitable distortion) from one level to another. Similarly, guidance and word to field units can be effectively transmitted by video (either in real time by broadcast or via pouch by tape).

11. There are, of course, major practical problems standing in the way of this description of what our future might be with regard to video:

- There is no Agency policy guidance or statement of objectives concerning television and its future in the Agency.

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- Major dollar resource investment will be required, though no one right now has a clue on what the order of magnitude would be.
- Personnel skills are not now with us to accomplish such tasks. The absence of skills is particularly real in the intelligence production area but the absence is apparent in other areas as well. The ad hoc group was impressed by the "ad-hockery" of most personnel assignments in the video field. There has been little specialized training or recruitment of special qualifications.
- We need better planning and coordination of proposals for investment in equipment (as the MAG paper points out). One particular issue in need of resolution is how to plan for centralized laboratories and facilities for the production of video films and tapes. Should there be one centralized facility or a series of them in support of special tasks?
- There is the problem of assessing the future impact of video on the Office of Communications.
- Video materials and equipment may have security vulnerabilities (e.g., emanations; controls of tapes). This needs study so that R&D might be devoted to fixes or so that risks might otherwise be reduced.

12. What this boils down to then is the need for a determination of Agency objectives with regard to video employment and for detailed follow-up by planning officers and action units.

13. At the risk of gratuitous lecturing, this paper suggests that Agency management should start by encouraging the growth of wise applications of video technology to intelligence processes. At present, video usage is so fragmented that this usage and its potential could be damaged by demanding that each component justify its current activities. Few are based on compelling requirements now, but taken as a whole they constitute a useful nucleus around which to plan the control of future growth.

14. No one Agency component now can usefully be selected as the Management Committee's action arm to track progress on whatever plans and objectives are blessed by the Committee. Among possibilities as staffs to do the planning and the tracking are:

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- a) a group made up of all the directorate planning officers;
or
- b) the Information Processing Board.

15. Whatever machinery is selected, sub-groups made up of representatives of components engaged in video activities could provide support and technical input. The participants in the 2 July and 16 July meetings saw the need for three such sub-groups:

- a) a technical working group to steer equipment procurement along compatible lines
- b) a production working group to seek optimum joint use of studio facilities, and
- c) a "library" working group to tackle the storage/retrieval and dissemination problems of videotape activities.

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 OTR, and CRS were agreed upon as the logical offices, respectively, for organizing the three working groups. These groups could be set up and begin coordinating work pending a decision on the broader planning body to which they would report.

16. Whatever machinery is selected, there is a need to think of the task now as a systematic planning exercise. The purpose is to come up with plans, objectives, timetables, scenarios and options...and, above all, encouragement of the fullest possible consideration of video as a creative tool for intelligence use.

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Attachments:

- TAB A: Minutes of Agency-Wide Meeting on Coordination of TV Activities, 2 Jul 73
- TAB B: Minutes of Follow-up Meeting on 16 Jul 73
- TAB C: Memo for DDM&S from D/Training, Subj: Control of Television Services, 27 Apr 73
- TAB D: Memo for Executive Secretary, CIA Management Committee from Management Advisory Group, Subj: Coordination of Agency Video Programs, 19 Jun 73

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